16

A HANDEFVL OF GLADSOME VERSES,

giuen to the Queenes Maiesty *at Woodstocke this Prograce.* 1592.

By THOMAS CHVRCHYARDE.

Hmn: Dyson

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TO THE QVEENES MOST EXCELLENT *MAIESTY.*

MOST gratious and ſacred Soueraigne, if hope of your princely fauour did not carry me beyond the compaſſe of my ordinary iudgement, I had long a goe ſurceaſed the common courſe of writing in verſe to your Maieſtie, But a ſweete and comfortable conceite of your gracious goodnes towards me, euer and at all times commanded my muſe, my pen, and vttermoſt power, to goe about no other earthly felicity then the ſeruing and pleaſing of the onely Phœnix of this world, my betters farre haue beene ful of that fortunate humor, and thriuen well thereby, & my ſelfe deſires neuer to be diſcharged of that ſweet ſeruitude, pleaſãt to the mind, profitable to the body, and a ſafety for the ſoule. Now in this quenchles deſire of mine that encreaſeth a continuall thirſt to doe well, there riſeth a reſtles cogitation, making me think, that verſe, that booke, or that peece of ſeruice (as oft I haue put in practice) will be happely accepted, But beholding (moſt redoubted Queene) a multitude of people as well de-

ſpoſed as my ſelfe, that are rūning & preaſing apace before me, ſome with rare inuentions & ſome with deepe deuices to the honouring of your Maieſtie. I feare they haue carried cleane away ſo much knowledge frō me, that ther is left no deuice, nor matter to ſtudy on, ſuch is the bounty of our time, & forwardnes of their wittes which are learned, that all fine inuentions are ſmoothly reaped from my reach, & cunningly raked away from my vſe or commoditie. Then am I forced, to ſearch what ſubſtāce or ſlēder ſtuffe of poetrie lyes cowching in mine owne ſhallow head, and ſo happning on a few voluntary rimes I haue as it were by good fortune, peeced or cōpounded vp a booke, which I cal a handful of gladſome verſes, God graunt they be pleaſing, but the beſt is they are deuiſed for a paſtime, inuēted for a merry conceyt, and preſented of a harm les mind, to the ſweete and ſacred conſideration of your Maieſtie. Thus hoping they ſhal haue free paſſage to your princely preſentes I pray humbly for the preſervation of your moſt Royall perſon.

Your Maieſties dutiful and loyall ſeruant,

THOMAS CHVRCHYARD.

A few volu ntary verses to the general readers.

If aged daies, had dryed vp my Muse
As summer drouth, hath parcht both hearb and grasse
Yet now compeld, my pen againe to vse
That world shall see, my minde is as it was
Looke for no gold, when I can giue but glasse
My morning dew, sun beames hath taken hence
And troubled springs, yeelds puddle water sence.

Take edge away, the knife can cut no more
Hard stony ground, can beare but little corne
Old appels sone, are rotten at the kore
Ne Figs nor Grapes, can come from pricking thorne
The glasse soone goes, from silke that long is worne
Hope for no fruit, when leaues forsakes the tree
So falleth out, betweene my verse and me.

When youth was fresh, and florisht as a flowre
The wits were quicke, and ready to conceiue
When age did frowne, and browes began to lowre
My skull grue scant, the muses did me leaue
Then tract of time, in head did cobwebs weaue
So rusty grew, the reason of the braine
And euer since, I lost my Poets vaine.

What though ripe wit, be now but bare and blunt
And fine deuice, of head is farre to seeke
And age can not, doe that which youth was wont
And pen scarce makes, a verse in halfe a weeke
And all my workes, not worth a little leeke
Yet what I doe, but bad or worthy praise
I neuer robd, no writer in my daies.

It is mine owne, I bring to Printers Presse
I haue by happe, a Hatchet in my hand
To hew the wood, (let it be more or lesse)
In what strange forme, I list to let it stand
though some be chips, let all bee iustly scand

Voluntary verses to the generall Readers.

Ne chips ne choice, nor nothing els I knew
But was well ment, and may abide the vew.

A Booke in Presse, that I my challenge name
Shall tell you more, of workes that I haue done
But blame me not, (since each man striues for fame)
To holde on right, the course wherein I runne
I ought to weare, the cloth my fingers spunne
I will so lowd, for bookes and verses crie
That sure no bird, shall with my feathers flie.

Some Peakocks then, will spread their tailes no more
Small boast is best, let touchstone trie out golde
I haue as yet, some tragedies in store
That like Shores wife, in verses shalbe tolde
Condemne no man, though he be waxen olde
A rough barkt tree, whose bowes but crooked grow
When season serues, some mellowd fruit may show.

A great olde Oake, long time will akornes beare
And small young graffes, are long in sprouting out
Some saie old wine, is liked euerie where
And all men knowes, new ale is full of grout
Old horse goes well, young tits are much to doubt
But sure old golde, is more esteemd then new
No Hawke compares, with Hagard in the mew.

Old men know much, though young men cal them fooles
Old bookes are best, for there great learning is
Old authours too, are daily read in Schooles
New sectes are nought, olde knowledge can not misse
Old gypes was good, and nothing like to this
Where fraude and craft, and fineneſſe all would haue
And playnest men, can neither pole nor shaue.

Olde fathers built, faire Colledges good store,
And gaue great goods, and landes to bring vp youth
Young men thinke skorne, to make of little more
And spends away, their thrift to tell the truth

Olde

M

Voluntary verſes to the generall Readers.

Olde mindes were full, of mercie grace and ruth
And pitty tooke, of thoſe that ſeemd to lacke
Young gallants gay, from pooze doe turne their backe.

Olde cuſtomes good, at length becam good lawes
Olde lawes are likte, and honourd of the wiſe
Good men obey, the euils olde ozder dzawes
Newe fond delights, olde fathers did deſpiſe
In olde graue heads, great ſkill and wiſedome lies
Sounde councell comes, from age in time of neede
Olde mens aduice, is that which doth the deede.

Olde beaten waies, are readie ſtill to hit
Theſe new by-paths, leades men on many ſtiles
An olde pzouerbe, hath no moze wozdes then wit
Newe fangled heades, at each light fancie ſmiles
Olde wiſedome farre, ſurmounts young fondlings wiles
Erperience is, the doctoz eury daie
That carries cloſe, all knowledge cleane away.

Young hounds are fleete, the olde hunts ſlowe and true
Olde dogges bite ſoze, if all his teeth be ſound
Olde auncient friends, are better then the newe
In younglings loue, there is ſmall ſuretie found
Foz like a toppe, fine fancie turneth round
Olde colth oz ſilke, made in our elder daies
Weares long and firme, when new things ſoone decaies.

No further nowe, of age but to my taſke
I tooke in hand, to ſhewe my duety thzow
Yet licker ſweete, comes none from emptie kaſke
With dargis ſowze, is filo olde barrell now
But reaſon muſt, inuent the meane and howe
I doe diſcharge, my duety as I ought
To make a booke, ſhall anſwere wziters thought.

Nowe muſt my Muſe, goe bozrowe if I may,
Wy betters wozkes, to fill my matter full

Tuſh

Voluntary verſes to the generall Readers.

Tuſh woꝛld growes hard, each man will ſay me nay
Some cannot ſpare, a little locke of wooll
So greedely, foꝛ pealfe they plucke and pull
But namely ſome, ſo watch and pꝛy foꝛ faine
That they with woꝛdes, will hinder mens good name.

Spite is a ſparke, of fire that flies in thaire
And makes a cracke, like pouder in a dagge
Spite hides foule thoughts, in lookes and ſpeeches faire
Whoſe woꝛdes reſts not, as long as tongue may wagge
Spite of himſelfe, will boldly boaſt and bꝛagge
To hurt by hate, the hart that har meles is
Foꝛ ſpite like ſnake, in euery hedge can his.

Who flings a ſtone, at euery dogge that barkes
A wearie arme, is ſurelie like to haue
Though enuy ſhootes, his bolts at many markes
Pꝛide wins not all, the gloꝛy he doth craue
Some will not giue, the dead good woꝛds in graue
Howe ſhould the quicke, then get bad woꝛlds goodwill
When hollowe harts, but harbours hatred ſtill.

March on plaine booke, although thou paſſe the pikes
Some marſhall man, will ſaue a ſouldiers life
Holde in thy head, from thoſe that thee miſlikes
In ſkoꝛnefull daies, I knowe diſdaine is riefe
Thy gladſome verſe, ſtirs vp moꝛe mirth then ſtrife
So Pꝛince thou pleaſe, thine owne deſire thou haſt
Come cleare from court, care not foꝛ enuies blaſt.

Thus Readers all, I bid you heere farewell
And to the Prince, a ſimple tale I tell.

FINIS.

A HANDEFVLL OF GLADSOME VERSES GIVEN TO THE QVEENS Maiesty at Woodstocke this prograce.

I Most presume of all
(A boldnes more then needs)
To come where flowers sweet sent lets fall
And I bring nought but weeds.

But though the fountaine springs
From whence all learning flowes
By study great, great science brings
And therewith duety showes.

The barraine ground of mine
That seld sweet roses beares
May yeeld some word or pleasant line
Shall please your Princely eares.

But as an Oaten pipe
When shepheard plaies a round
Can moue no matter of delite.
By strangnes of the sound.

So verse puft vp with quill
And cunning sleight of braine
(Where swift conceite conceiues at will
Some grace of Poets vaine.)

No pearsing passage findes
To enter as it would
In great estates, whose noble mindes
Knowes quickly glasse from gould.

A tale of plaine plowe man
That roughly runneth on
Findes frowns for fauor now and than
When gracious lokes are gone.

What meanes my Muſes weake,
In heate of humor newe:
So neere graue heads to write or ſpeake,
Of things I ſeldome knewe.

As one ſtart out of ſleepe,
Tels dreames and viſions rare,
To thoſe that talke of dreames no keepe.
Nor doth for fancies care.

Our engliſh Idle rimes,
To this is here compard:
Whoſe rouing reaſons often times,
Reapes nought but ſmall regard.

For learned ſages wies,
That much haue ſeene and red:
Who knowes the courſe of ſtars in ſkies,
And what may well be ſed.

And all the liberall artes,
Haue at their fingers ends:
They for their giftes and ſpeciall partes,
Which God to ſcholers ſendes.

Are worthie hearing ſtill,
They bring the ſugred cuppe:
They are the nurſes of good ſkill,
That foſters children vppe.

They with the muſes talke
As all things were their owne
And like the Gods doe clofely walke
In ſecret clouds vnknown

Vaine verſes haue no power
Great vertue to perſwade
They are but bloſſomes of a flowre
(Whoſe beauty ſoone doth fade)

That pleaseth men a while,
with wordes of no great weight:
A speech that may some eares beguile
A fine and pretty sleight.

A ripe invention rare,
That springs on deepe deuice:
But verse is worne so weake and bare,
It beares but little price.

Because so many braines,
Runnes verses out of breath:
And posting wits with thankeles paines,
Hath ridden rime to death.

Though Poets in time past,
As Virgill and the rest:
Gote crownes and many a famous blast,
To make them hold vp crest.

Yet most of them poore men,
Like byrdes but newely pluckt:
For Ovid that through gift of pen,
Did seeme that dyre he luckt.

The springes of learned lore,
He had hard hap withall:
Homer had no great golde in store,
Nor worldly wealth at call.

And since, fewe Poets rose,
To any worthy place:
And some scarce got meate drink & clothes
So poore was Poets case.

If Poets lucke be such,
That daily they decline:
And writers neuer can be rich,
For all their flourish fine.

Then ſeeke a better trade,
And fling away thy quill:
And take a mattoke and a ſpade,
And digge downe Maulvorne hill.

Twere better labour ſo,
By ſweat of browes to liue:
Then like a threedbare Poet goe:
That hath no bread to giue.

Yet men may ſeeke to thriue,
By verſe or ſtately proſe:
Againſt ill chaunce, or ſtreame to ſtriue,
Both ſtrength and time we loſe.

Verſe well deuiſde and framde,
Wins friends and feareth foes
So writer ſhape, vnharmd or blamd,
For treading on meus toes.

Where angry cornes doth growe,
Yea verſe breedes merry bloud:
When each ſad word to world doth showe
A liuely ſentence good.

Verſe maketh many knowen,
That els forgotten are:
Who brings odde verſis of their owne,
And prints no borrowd ware.

Who watcheth not their hours,
To ſteale and picke away:
From others gardens goodly flowres,
To make their poſies gay.

Thus ſome doe borrowe much,
And then on braues doe ſtand:
A begger ſo may ſoone be rich,
Ne borne to rent nor land.

Great princes haue made verse,
And fauzed poetrie well:
Uerse hath a grace the clouds to pearce,
And clime where Gods doe dwell.

In verse great vertue is,
If worke well passe the file:
And verse gets grace, with that or this,
To make the Prince to smile.

Then many knacks we proue,
Our credite well to keepe:
And tell how Lords for Ladies loue,
Will lie all day a sleepe.

And faine when they awake,
In verse or letters long:
That they doe die for mistresse sake,
And suffer too much wrong.

A large discourse thereof,
Twere good to tell in deede:
But some would say I iest and scoffe,
And speake more words then neede.

Nay better talke of bogges,
That walkes in dead mens shapes:
Or tell of little pretty pogges,
As Monkies Owles and Apes.

A tale of two ours long,
Blinde peoples eares to please
Nay that were like a Syreins song,
That shipmen heares on seas.

Strange Farlees fathers tolde,
Of feendes and hagges of hell:
And how that Syrses when she would,
Could skill of sorceric well.

And how old thin facke wiues
That rosted crabs by night
Did tell of monsters in their liues
That now proue shadowes light.

And told what Marlin spoke
Of world and times to come
But all that fire doth make no smoke
For in mine eare doth home.

Another kinde of Bee
That sounds a tune most strange
A trembling noise, of words to me
That makes my countenance change.

Of old Hobgoblings guise
That walkt like ghost in sheetes
With maides that would not early rise
For feare of Bugs and spreets

Some say the fayres faire
Did daunce on bednall greene,
And fine familiars of the aire
Did talke with men vnseene.

And oft in moone shine nights
When each thing drawes to rest
Was seene dum shoes and vggly sights
That feared every guest.

Which lodged in the house
And where good cheere was great
Hodgepoke would come & drink carowse
And mounch vp all the meat.

But where foule sluts did dwell
Who vsde to sit vp late
And would not scowre their pewter well
There came a mirrie mate.

To kitchin or to haule,
Or place where sweets resort:
Then downe went dish & platters all,
To make the greater sport.

A further sport fell out,
When they to spoile did fall:
Rude Robin good fellow the lowt,
Would skime the milke bowls all.

And search the cream pots too,
For which poore milke maide weepes,
God wot what such mad gests will doe:
When people soundly sleepes.

Then world full merry was,
And gossips made good glee:
And men for wealth did little passe,
Good mindes were franke and free.

And some found heapes of gold,
Long hid in hollow ground:
And tript with timbrels where they would
Full many a frisking round.

These are but fabuls faind,
Because true stories old:
In doubtfull daies are more disdaind,
Then any tale is tolde.

These toies cuts of the cares,
That worldly causes brings:
And drawes the heavy mind outwares,
To thinke on better things.

As when a may game comes,
Before a sort of states:
With morrice dauncers flutes and drums
That common weals debates.

The motion of the mirth
Though ſimple be the ſhow
May moue the ſaddeſt man on earth
To gladſome thoughts I trow.

But how farre of am I
Now brought from wit and ſence
To tell a tale ſmels like a lie
Before ſo great a Prince,

O pardon my raſh wit
Sweete Queene and ſoueraigne deare
For he that doth in heauen ſit
Knowes mine intent is cleare.

From all offence in minde
For when I tooke this taſke
Each toy and fancy head could finde
(as man diſguiſde in maſke.)

To make you laugh or ſmile
I tooke in hand to write
But now with troth another while
(And baniſh fables quite.)

My pen ſhall armed be
In this ſweete cauſe and ſoile
To ſheeld my muſe, my verſe and me
From blemiſh blot or ſoile.

Now as by heaunly grace
You paſt through many a ſheere
So Roial Prince this auncient place
Hath hap to haue you heere.

Old Woodſtocke houſe is glad
It ſhall haue ſtone and lime
That long with Iuy hath bin clad
To ſhew the ruen of time.

This seat may sure this shrine,
That thousands now doth praise:
That did preserue, by power diuine,
The Phœnix of our daies.

And in a cruell age,
When might did right great wrong:
This house was made the Phœnix cage,
And held her here so long.

That no proude tyrants power,
Had force to touch her then:
True harted people eury houre,
And prayers of good men.

Kept Phœnix safe and sound,
And brought her to the crowne:
Who doth in vertues so abound,
Shee raignes with great renowne.

And further flies her fame,
And spreads for gifts most rare:
Then all the princes we can name,
Let foes speake what they dare:

Nowe humble subiects true,
Whereof you haue great store:
A triple crowne, presents to you,
Of fame for euer more.

And such as neuer sawe,
Your Maiestie till nowe:
Full neare the coatch do daily drawe,
We see wherefore and howe.

The people swarmes like Bees
When Prince abroad doth ride:
And some climes vp to tops of trees,
As soone as shee is spied.

Yea ſuch as ſaw her firſt
Doe after trudge a maine
Who haue in hart, ſo great a thirſt
To ſee her once againe.

That they ſtand gazing ſtill
A freſh on Phœnix face
As though they neuer had there fill
Of looking on her grace.

Comes this of cuſtome old
That ſubiects ows a king
No ſure it rather doth vnfolde
An inward ſecreet thing.

Of kindely zeale they beare
By nature not by art
Ioynd faſt with duty loue and feare
That flowes from faithfull hart.

A ſpeciall warme goodwill
For neuer King was ſeene
More truely ſerude, more followd ſtill
More honord then our Queene.

Some noble cauſe there is
That workes ſuch wonder now
Then who hath ſence to vew of this
And can ſearch cauſes throw.

Diſcus this cauſe a right
But if would credit me
In liuely ſort, and open ſight
I doe ſuch graces ſee.

In your moſt gratious raigne
That daily ſhines ſo cleare
As neuer none ſhall reach or ſtaine
Nor euer could come neare.

This grace which God doth giue
Whereon great graces groe
Makes Prince loue peace and long to liue
And long a prograsse goe.

This grace great Ioue hath sent
To garde your grace from harme
That Practise foule, nor false intent
Nor wordes nor deedes nor charme.

Nor forraine force nor warres
Nor proude attempts shall feare
For God that guides sun moone and starrs
Shall saue you eury where.

O sacred Soueraigne sweete,
Our faire red rose and white
We fall on knees at Cesars feete
To see our worlds delite.

And on her life depend
That now the sworde doth swaie
The Lord of hosts doth her defend
In such a kinde of way.

That nothing may impeach
Her heaunly graces great
For sure it passeth humane reach
To touch her sacred seat.

So raigne good Queene in rest
Full free from all anoye,
As one the Lord abouc hath blest,
To be all Englandes ioye.

FINIS.

erſe of variety to all thoſe that honors the onely Phœnix of the worlde, which verſes are but xx. lines and hath in them ten waies, finde out the ſame who pleaſeth.

MY PHŒNIX *feathers faire,* as Phebus beames beſpreades the skie
Shades face from partching aire, in hoat extreames and wether dry
t by the aire ſhee liues, dame kinde her ſelfe will haue it ſo
nd life and breath ſhee giues, as farre as Phœnix force may go
› them ſhee liſts aduaunce, the faurets of our happy time
n whom her eie doth glance, vnto the clowds ſhee makes them clime
at where doth Phœnix frowne, as fortunes wheele were turned quite
e flings proud Pecockes downe, ſome fauls in laſh and worlds deſpite
; Eagle mounting skies, in roiall ſort like ſtately King
oth daunt each bird that flies, if hee but clap his feathred wiinge
And where hee liſts to pray, on any foule that life doth beare
o Hawke makes flight that day, nor dare come well in preſens there)
› Phœnix in her giues, with princely pompe as you may ſee,
)oth dazell cleareſt eies, and dailye conquers each degree:
nd ſtrikes baſe people blinde, that makes their God of worldly droſſe:
Vho beares no noble minde, and digges and delues for mucke and moſſe:
Vherefore you courtiers nowe, the prime and buds of youthfull bliſſe:
:onfeſſe your duetie throwe, if you can iudge what vertue is.
ut one in theſe our daies, and ſhee a Queene nowe note it well:
)eſerues immortall praiſe, that doth in worthy Brittaine dwell.